



NEWS RELEASE

For media inquiries, contact: Nick Wolda
nwolda@thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov

The Woodlands Township COVID-19 Update, Friday, April 10, 2020

Township News

Special Board of Directors Meeting

The Woodlands Township Board of Directors held a special meeting via videoconference at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 9, 2020, to discuss the Township's response to COVID-19. Watch the video at <http://www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/778/Meeting-Videos>.

Reminder: Parks Are Still Closed

The Woodlands Township urges all residents and visitors to continue to do their part to slow the spread of COVID-19 and reminds that all Township parks are closed to the public until further notice, including over the holiday weekend.

"This is an unprecedented time, and we urge Township residents and visitors to abide by the closures for their own safety and the safety of our area," said Township Chairman Gordy Bunch. "We understand the importance of Easter Sunday to many of our families in The Woodlands and that it is a time for religious and family gatherings, but we must all be especially vigilant in practicing social distancing and not congregating in public areas. We cannot let our guard down in this endeavor."

Chairman Bunch continued, "It's ok for household members to be together at a park, but not to use playground equipment, basketball or tennis courts, skate parks, and most importantly, keep social distancing from non household members. We are gaining assurance by the data that shows that social distancing is having a positive effect on the spread of the disease, and the sooner we can get through this, the faster we can attempt to return to normal and get our economy running again. I thank you all for the part you are doing to help keep us all safe."

The Woodlands Township wants to dispel a rumor going around in social media, primarily through teenagers stating there are "Safe Corona Free Social Circles," as brought to the attention of the board by Director Bob Milner. "There is no safe corona virus social circle program," said Director Milner. "And it certainly not safe for teenagers to be out socially interacting with each other and our community. Their ability to transfer this disease to people that might be more susceptible to it needs to be taken into consideration."

[Watch a video as Chairman Bunch discusses safety in the parks.](#)



Help Our Heroes Yields Successful First Week

The Township's *Help Our Heroes* medical supplies drive is off to a great start. Since the program began on Monday, April 6, 2020, the Township has received 420 shoe/hair covers, 3,900 gloves, 35 face shields, 818 masks, 21 packages/wipes, 6 sanitizer bottles, 2 large liquid hand soaps, 23 isolation gowns, 263 safety goggles, 46 paper towel rolls and 3 Lysol cleaners.



Please consider donating materials if you have them on-hand. Your help is greatly appreciated! Collection Days and Locations are Mondays and Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Central Fire Station, located at 9951 Grogan's Mill Rd., The Woodlands, TX 77380. Please email pbuck@thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov if you can help.

- **Supplies Needed:**

Isolation gowns

Gloves

Masks – N95s, surgical, procedure, etc.

Hair Covers

Full Face Shields

PAPR Hoods – Typically only used when doing an aerosolizing procedure.

Eyewear – Face shields, reusable goggles or disposable glasses

Boot Covers / Shoe Covers

Germicidal Wipes

Disinfectant Spray / Paper Towels



Pictured above, Township Director and Public Health Liaison Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, Township Program Specialists Susan Martin and Julie Quinn, and The Woodlands Fire Department Chief Palmer Buck welcome your donations at the Help Our Heroes collection site.

Do Good. Feel Good: A Guide to Community Service While Social Distancing

Looking to make a positive impact during this unprecedented event in our community? Take a look at [how you can help](#) while adhering to CDC guidelines for social distancing.



Please Stay Safe! Practice Social Distancing

For pedestrians using the pathways, please remain a minimum of 6 feet apart. Be sure to stay to the right, watch for other pathway users, be especially alert when running, and listen for audible signals and allow faster pathway users to pass freely.



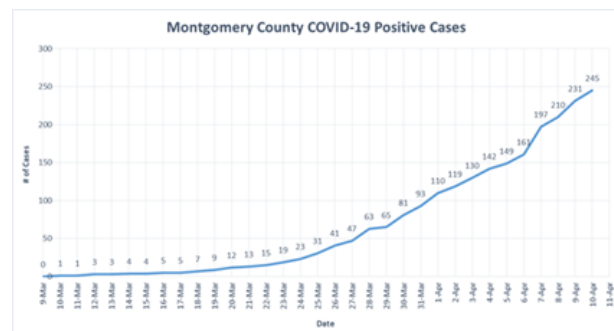
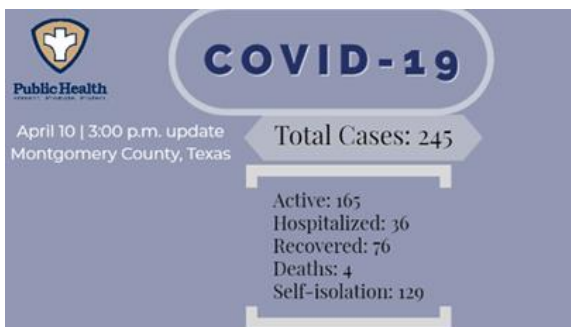
Today's County News

Montgomery County COVID-19 Case Count

Montgomery County Public Health District, in conjunction with Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management, can confirm there are now 245 positive cases of COVID-19, up 14 cases from yesterday.

Details on Montgomery County cases can be found here: <https://mcpd-tx.org/coronavirus-covid-19/confirmed-cases/>.

Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management updates a dashboard for the cases here: <https://coronavirus-response-moco.hub.arcgis.com/>.



Harris County COVID-19 Case Count

As of April 10, 2020 (4:00 p.m.), Harris County Public Health (HCPH) has 146 new cases of COVID-19, which brings the total to 1,198 positive cases. HCPH is also confirming that 296 of its patients have recovered. Harris County lists by quadrants, and the Village of Creekside Park is located in the NW Quadrant, where there are 458 active cases, 164 recovered and 14 deaths.

There have been 24 total deaths of COVID-19 in Harris County. None of these numbers include the City of Houston. A full description of the numbers can be found here: <https://harriscounty.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/c0de71f8ea484b85bb5efcb7c07c6914>

State and National News

Below are highlights from today's press conferences from Governor Abbott and Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner.

From Governor Abbott

Texas COVID-19 Data:

- over **116,000** Texans have been tested
- **11,449** positive tests statewide
- **1,532** hospitalizations
- **221** fatalities connected to COVID-19



Governor Abbott announced that he is preparing an executive order to be released next week to provide guidelines for reopening the Texas economy. The Governor reiterated that safety would be the primary focus. The Governor would not specify a date for reopening but indicated that his office is working with the White House, CDC and the Texas Department of Health Services on appropriate guidelines. The Governor indicated it was possible to “protect lives and promote the livelihood of Texans.”

From Mayor Turner

Houston COVID-19 Data:

- **68** new cases reported by Houston today. The total number of Houston positive cases are **2,063**.
- **2** new fatalities in Houston. Both patients had underlying health conditions. Houston has had **16** total fatalities.

From U.S. Congressman Kevin Brady: Information from the Texas Workforce Commission

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) recently introduced new staggered call times for those seeking to file unemployment. Effective immediately, TWC asks that Texans use their area code to find their proposed call and access times. Staggering claims will provide better access to needed services.

See below chart for recommended call and access times:

Recommended Call and Access Times

| Area Code of Applicant | Suggested Call Time |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Area Codes Beginning with 9 | Mon-Wed-Fri 8:00 a.m.-Noon |
| Area Codes Beginning with 3, 4, 5,6 | Mon-Wed-Fri 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. |
| Area codes Beginning with 7, 8 | Tues -Thurs-Sat 8:00 a.m. - Noon |
| Area codes Beginning with 2 | Tues-Thurs-Sat 1:00 p.m. -5:00 p.m. |

Please note that Texans will not be penalized for a delay due to call or user volume. Claims for individuals affected by COVID-19 are eligible to be backdated. For more information, please visit the [TWC website](#) or call 512-463-8942.

For more resources for families and workers, please visit Congressman Brady’s [website](#).



Make Your Own Mask

With the CDC now encouraging people to wear masks for essential errands/grocery trips without buying up any of the remaining PPEs in the free market, a helpful video has been created to make your own at home. [Watch the video here.](#)



Need some help thinking about all of this? COVID-19 Mental Health Support Line

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has launched a statewide mental health support line to help Texans experiencing anxiety, stress or other emotional challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This resource offers support for all Texans and can be reached any time day or night at **833-986-1919**.

The line is operated by the [Harris Center for Mental Health and IDD](#), and offers trauma-informed support and psychological first aid to those experiencing mental health symptoms related to COVID-19. Counseling services are confidential and free of charge.

More information on mental health resources and your local mental health authority can be found on [HHSC's website](#). [View the full release.](#)

[View additional state and national mental health resources and contact information.](#)

Mosaics of Mercy

Mosaics of Mercy is a non-profit that serves as a hub for resources for mental well-being. The organization stays current on the available mental health resources for our community, including the status of treatment programs, counselors seeing clients through telehealth, and virtual support groups.



More information can be found at www.mosaicsofmercy.com. Help is available Monday - Friday from 9 am - 5 pm at 346-703-0051 for personal assistance navigating resources. There are current resources listed at <https://mosaicsofmercy.com/coronavirus/>. New episodes of the Hope Pieced Together podcast are released weekly, interviewing local professionals on topics related to mental well-being for this period. <https://mosaicsofmercy.com/hope-pieced-together/>.

Shopping and Business News

Easter Specials: Dine Out without Dining In

Social distancing may be keeping us apart from loved ones this Easter Sunday but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy some of your favorite food and beverages. Many restaurants in The Woodlands have designed special family-sized meal packages that include multiple courses and beverages. All restaurants require advance orders so [check out a full list of Easter specials here](#). Happy Easter from your friends at Visit The Woodlands, the official destination marketing organization of The Woodlands.

Business Assistance Resources Available

The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce lists a variety of resources available to local businesses affected by the pandemic, including CARES Act Funding Options.

Complete details can be found at

<https://www.woodlandschamber.org/coronavirus-resources>.

Beware of Stimulus Check Scams

As you may know, the government is preparing to distribute stimulus checks to help provide relief to households due to the COVID 19 crises. Scammers use public health emergencies as opportunities for new fraud schemes. In fact, The Federal Trade Commission has already received complaints about stimulus checks scams. [Learn how to protect yourself from these scams](#).

Grocery Store Special Hours

Many grocery stores have special hours either for re-stocking or for seniors and others to have a quieter shopping experience. Please visit our community resource list to [view hours at different stores](#).

Staying Safe While Grocery Shopping

Whether you are grocery shopping for your family in person or utilizing curbside pick-up/delivery options, there are still important safety practices that can help to limit your risk of exposure to COVID-19.

- Follow [federal guidelines](#) regarding social distancing and prevention. Maintain 6 feet of distance between yourself and other shoppers/grocery store employees. Pay particular attention when standing in line and continue to observe the 6-foot rule at all times.



- Disinfect high-touch surfaces such as grocery carts handles with a disinfectant wipe, if possible.
- If you use a debit or credit card, keep in mind that those machines are high-touch surfaces. Wash your hands after touching those surfaces and wipe down your cards with disinfectant wipes or an alcohol-based sanitizer. The [EPA has created a list of known disinfectants](#) that are effective against COVID-19 on surfaces.
- If possible, go to the store during off-peak hours when the store is less crowded. If you are a senior, try to shop during the Senior Hours that are offered at grocery stores in the community.
- Discard any disposable grocery bags upon unpacking your groceries and disinfect counters and surfaces where bags may have been placed for unpacking.
- Always wash your hands after handling food packaging and before eating.

Please keep in mind, [the FDA has stated that there is no evidence that COVID-19 is transmitted via food](#). It is a respiratory-borne virus and therefore the risk of contracting it through food or food packaging is extremely low. The main risk to an individual is thought to be from exposure to another person with COVID-19, who is symptomatic or asymptomatic, and touching one's face or mouth after coming into contact with an infected surface. [Social distancing and washing your hands frequently remains the most effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19.](#)

Community Resource Information

The following items were received from the agencies noted.

Upcoming Blood Drives

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center will host three upcoming blood drives at the end of April. Every donation can help save as many as three lives. Please see schedule below. For more information, please visit giveblood.org.

- Thursday, April 23, 2020
11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Entergy
10055 Grogan's Mill Parkwood 2, Spring, TX 77380
- Friday, April 2, 2020
9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
The Woodlands Family YMCA at Shadowbend
6145 Shadowbend Place, The Woodlands, TX 77381
- The Woodlands Neighborhood Donor Center
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY
3091 College Park Drive, Suite 130, The Woodlands, TX 77384
To schedule your appointment, please call: 936-321-8440 or [visit their website](#).
Special hours April 6 – 19:
Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Saturday: 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Sunday: Closed



Hotels Open in The Woodlands

The Woodlands hotel properties are here to assist in any way needed throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Whether you are a medical professional needing a room, a first responder, or simply needing a quiet and safe place to work, The Woodlands has you covered. Below is a list of all open hotels in The Woodlands that are happy to welcome you to their property throughout this time.

- Drury Inn The Woodlands
- Residence Inn Lakefront Drive
- Hilton Garden Inn
- Hyatt Place
- Fairfield Inn and Suites
- Best Western Plus
- Candlewood Suites
- Courtyard Lakefront Drive

Stay up to date on any updates and special rates available [here](#).

United Way of Greater Houston Helpline and COVID-19 Recovery Fund

United Way of Greater Houston's 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE is our community's go-to resource in times of disaster and every day. The 211 Texas/United Way HELPLINE is available 24/7 to connect people with food, childcare, transportation, and other critical information and resources. If you or someone you know needs help, dial 211.

United Way of Greater Houston and the Greater Houston Community Foundation have launched the Greater Houston COVID-19 Recovery Fund to serve our region's most vulnerable neighbors impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Learn more and donate to the fund at greaterhoustonrecovery.org.

YMCA Operating as an Essential Personnel Child Care Site

Located at 6145 Shadowbend Place, The Y is providing a full day of programming, snack and meals for the children of "essential personnel," including medical workers; first responders; select government staff; and grocery store, pharmacy and food distributor employees.

Children, ages 1 - 12 years old are eligible to register. The program runs Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m. and features games, arts and crafts, STEAM and literacy activities. [Register online](#). Financial assistance is available.

Food Banks—How You Can Help

Local food banks are inventorying their resources to ascertain what will be needed in the days to come. Many Township residents have expressed a desire to volunteer or donate; please see the information below regarding those needs.



- Interfaith of The Woodlands remains open to meet the basic needs in South Montgomery County, including Senior Grocery Delivery, Crisis Assistance Services and Food Pantry Assistance. Hours are Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Curbside services are by phone at 281-367-1230. Donations are being accepted. Please read on to learn how you can lend support to Interfaith.
- Montgomery County Food Bank is conducting a virtual food drive. Please read on to learn how you can help.
- Meals on Wheels has coordinated a food drive to stock the shelves. A system in place to deliver supplies to the most at-risk neighbors, but they need your help to provide the food... because no one deserves to have an empty pantry, especially at times like this. During these times of uncertainty, food insecurity is at an all-time high. An increasing number of seniors are becoming homebound, as the fear of going out and being exposed to COVID-19 continues. [Join the virtual food drive.](#)
- Community Assistance Center Serving Montgomery County is currently providing assistance to residents of Montgomery County with financial assistance for utilities, pre-packaged bags of groceries during Wednesday Markets and is accepting donations. For more information view the flyer.

Hotlines for health questions and COVID-19

Montgomery County: 936-523-5040

Harris County: 713-634-1110

Free Self-Screening Tool for COVID-19

Visit the self-screening tool on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

Tracking COVID-19: Local, Regionally, Nationally, Internationally

Below are the widgets for tracking COVID19.

- [Montgomery County](#)
- [Texas Counties Statewide](#)
- [Texas Department of Health and Human Services Case Counts](#)
- [Global Cases](#)

The Township's Coronavirus page

The Woodlands Township's special COVID-19 information page can be found at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/covid19. This page now features Montgomery and Harris county Hubs, community resources and updated COVID-19 news from the Federal Government and the CDC. This page also includes the latest news from The Township, updates from partner agencies, social distancing strategies, important links, frequently asked questions, live Twitter feeds and more. Please check back often as it is updated frequently.



Stay Connected

Please stay connected to The Woodlands Township through our many communications channels. Learn more and sign up at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/stayinformed.



The Woodlands Township publishes this update to inform residents and businesses regarding the COVID-19 and its impact on The Woodlands Township. Please sign up for Township news and notifications at www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/notifyme.